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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Morris Matthis, Christ United Methodist Church, Sugar Land, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, who is the giver of every good and perfect gift and who has blessed us with this good land and fashioned us into one united people, grant wisdom to those whom in Your name we entrust the authority of government.

Guide them, O God, in their deliberations and in their decisionmaking. Grant them the grace to see themselves as leaders who stand in the shadow of history. Bless them with the humility and insight of Abraham Lincoln, who said: "I have been driven many times to my knees with the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go."

Give them the assurance that when the hour is desperate and the way unclear, there is one to whom they can go, and then, O God, in Your Mercy, help them to go there.

In the name of the One who is the Hope of the world, amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. OLSON led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

WELCOMING REVEREND MORRIS MATTHIS

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, one of the privileges we have as Members of Congress is to have the leader of a church back home deliver the opening prayer

for the United States House of Representatives. Today, I'm proud to introduce America to my home pastor, Morris Matthis.

Morris has had a tremendous spiritual influence on my family and me. When we moved back to Texas, my wife and I worried about uprooting our two children from the only home they'd ever known. But we shouldn't have worried. We found Morris and the amazing people at Christ United Methodist Church in Sugar Land, Texas. They welcomed us with open arms, and have loved us ever since.

During his tenure at Christ United Methodist Church, Morris and his team—his wife, Jepilyn; his son, Kyle; and his daughter, Amy—have made sure that every single man, woman, and child who has walked through our church's doors has felt the peace, the love, and the faith that embraced my family.

Whatever I do in Congress, however long I'm here, I'll have no fonder memory than my pastor, Morris Matthis, standing before the American people in prayer for our great Nation.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS of New Hampshire). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

THE MONTFORD POINT MARINES

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Later today the House will consider H.R. 2447, a bill awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to the Montford Point Marines, the first African Americans to serve in the United States Marine Corps. The United States of America owes these heroes a debt of honor that we will endeavor to pay, in part, today. I rise in strong support of this measure.

It was President Franklin Roosevelt who issued an Executive order in June of 1941 that opened the doors for African Americans to enlist in the United States Marine Corps. Between 1942 and 1949, approximately 20,000 African Americans earned the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor at Camp Montford Point in Jacksonville, North Carolina. And we'll honor them today.

I especially want to commend the Montford Point Marines Indianapolis chapter's surviving marines. And since there are no "former marines," allow me to commend Marine Averitte Corley, Johnny Washington, and Lancaster Price, along with the late Walter Ezzell and Everette Sweat, who have done yeoman's work in keeping the proud memory of the Montford Point Marines alive in the Hoosier State.

The Congressional Gold Medal is a fitting tribute to the Montford Point

Marines. It marks the service and sacrifice of these trailblazing heroes, but it also marks our Nation's mark toward a more perfect union, and I heartily endorse it.

HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong opposition to cuts in the Home Energy Assistance Program, or HEAP as it is known in New York.

With snow in Buffalo forecast this week, it seems unconscionable to slash this essential aid that helps seniors afford their heating bills. However, the House Labor-HHS bill would do just that. It cuts HEAP and changes the formula in a way that penalizes New York and other cold-weather States.

New York's allocation would be cut by \$179 million, or 34 percent, from its current levels. As a result, HEAP assistance will be smaller, later, and benefit fewer New Yorkers. At a time when western New York heating prices are expected to increase, these cuts would force seniors and families to choose between heating their homes, putting food on the table, or purchasing prescription drugs.

I urge Congress to reject these cuts which threaten to leave many of the 235,000 HEAP recipients in Erie and Chautauqua counties out in the cold.

THE COST OF SENATE INACTION

(Mr. HULTGREN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we learned that by the end of this year another ratings agency may downgrade our Nation's sovereign debt. Why? Because they don't believe there's a plan to return our Nation to fiscal health. Well, they're not entirely right. In July, we passed the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act. It was a common-sense solution that would have maintained our Nation's strong credit rating. The bill went to the cul-de-sac called the Senate where, as so many things have, it died. Maybe that's not surprising.

Cut, Cap, and Balance would not only have cut spending, it would have changed the way Washington works. It would have made structural change.

For a do-nothing Senate that has not bothered to pass a budget in over 900 days, the idea of spending cuts and fiscal accountability must be utterly foreign. Once again, we see the high cost of their inaction.

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INVESTING IN INNOVATION AND EDUCATION

(Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia asked and was given permission to address